

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LIBREV 00621 291034Z

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FM AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6366

INFO AMCONSUL DOUALA

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

S E C R E T LIBREVILLE 0621

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, PFOR, GB, EK

SUBJ: GABONESE EQUATORIAL-GUINEA RELATIONS

1. FRENCH AMBASSADOR TO MALABO, RAGUENET, CURRENTLY VACATIONING IN LIBREVILLE, HAS HELD SERIES OF MEETINGS WITH NEWLY ARRIVED FRENCH AMBASSADOR TO GABON DELAUNEY DURING PAST FEW DAYS. FRENCH MILITARY COUNSELOR COL. RETOUT GAVE EMBASSY OFFICER FOLLOWING PARTIAL RUNDOWN ON THEIR DISCUSSIONS.

2. RAGUENET REPORTED WITH SOME CONCERN TO DELAUNEY THAT HE HAS IT DIRECTLY FROM MACIAS THAT GABONESE-EQUATORIAL GUINEAN BORDER PROBLEM FAR FROM SOLVED AND MAY INDEED BE HEATING UP. ACCORDING TO RAGUENET, MACIAS FEELS LAST YEARS "SETTELEMENT" WAS IMPOSED UPON HIM BY BONGO. WHAT RANKLES MACIAS PARTICULARLY IS THAT ARRANGEMENT ALONG NORTHWEST GABONESE BORDER NEAR BITAM PUTS APPROXIMATELY 20 KM. OF IMPORTANT EQUATORIAL GUINEAN NORTH-SOUTH ROAD UNDER GABONESE SOVEREIGNTY EVEN THOUGH GABONESE HAVE GUARANTEED TO EQUATORIAL GUINEANS UNIMPEDED USE OF ROAD. MACIAS AND OTHER IMPORTANT EQUATORIAL GUINEANS COME FROM DISPUTED AREA. RAGUENET ARGUED THAT BONGO SHOULD THEREFORE APPRECIATE EXTREME EQUATORIAL GUINEAN

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SECRET

PAGE 02 LIBREV 00621 291034Z

SENSITIVITY REALIZING HOW HE WOULD FEEL IF AREA NEAR FRANCEVILLE

WERE SEPARATED FROM GABON.

3. RAGUENET REPORTEDLY SAID MARITIME BOUNDARY SETTLEMENT ALSO VERY SHAKY AND THAT MACIAS MIGHT WITH ARRIVAL OF SOVIET MADE PATROL BOATS MAKE ATTEMPT TO RETAKE MBAGNE ISLAND.

4. TWO FRENCH AMBASSADORS ALSO REPORTEDLY DISCUSSED SOVIET PRESENCE IN EQUATORIAL GUINEA. RETOUT COMMENTED THAT HE HAS CURRENT LIST OF 29 SOVIET VESSELS OF ALL TYPES CURRENTLY OPERATING IN AND AROUND EQUATORIAL GUINEA. RUSSIAN TRAWLER WHICH RECENTLY TOWED IN DISABLED GABONESE SHIP TO OWENDO HARBOR, RETOUT REPORTED, WAS BRISTLING WITH ANTENNAS.
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